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RAISED BILL NUMBER 5217: AN ACT CONCERNING USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

This bill addresses an important House Republican concept that was proposed earlier this session, which was to create a taskforce to gather information about the use of unmanned aircrafts, also known as drones, in Connecticut. The purpose of our proposal is to ensure that members of the General Assembly are fully informed about this emerging technology prior to enacting regulations or restrictions on the use of unmanned aircrafts.

Unmanned aircrafts are powerful surveillance tools that create a host of privacy concerns. Certainly, they can assist law enforcement in their work but we must make sure that private citizens retain all of their rights under the Constitution.

Raised Bill 5217 provides for a number of protections for private citizens which we support. We have concerns regarding the requirement that the Commissioner of Transportation adopt regulations to regulate the operation of unmanned aircrafts as we are just beginning to understand the capabilities of these aircrafts. Instead, I would ask that the Judiciary Committee consider adding language that would establish a legislative taskforce to examine the issue in depth so when we do consider legislation that affects unmanned aircrafts, we cast informed votes.

I urge the Judiciary Committee to pass legislation this session to address unmanned aircraft use in Connecticut. Please allow the full General Assembly the opportunity to debate this issue and to determine what measures need to be implemented to protect the privacy and safety of our constituents.

Thank you.